

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace the specification with the substitute specification, submitted herewith.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 10-22 and 33-41, without prejudice or disclaimer, and amend claims 3-6, 7, 24, 27, and 30 as follows:

3. (ONCE AMENDED) A purified nucleic acid molecule that hybridizes to either strand of a denatured, double-stranded DNA comprising the nucleic acid sequence of any one of claims 1 or 2 under conditions of high stringency.

4. (ONCE AMENDED) The purified nucleic acid molecule as claimed in claim 3, wherein said isolated nucleic acid molecule is derived by in vitro mutagenesis from a sequence selected from SEQ ID NO:2 to NO: 15.

a¹
5. (ONCE AMENDED) A purified nucleic acid molecule encoding SEQ ID NOS: 5 or 7, or degenerate from SEQ ID NOS: 6 or 8 as a result of the genetic code.

6. (ONCE AMENDED) A purified nucleic acid molecule, which encodes SEQ ID NO:1, an allelic variant of SEQ ID NO:2, or a homolog of SEQ ID NO:2.

7. (ONCE AMENDED) A recombinant vector that directs the expression of a nucleic acid molecule selected from the group consisting of the purified nucleic acid molecules of claims 1, 2, and 6.

a²
24. (ONCE AMENDED) A method for the production of SEQ ID NO:1 comprising culturing a host cell of claim 23 under conditions promoting expression, and recovering the polypeptide from the culture medium.

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